The North Carolina Standard.

THOMAS LORING, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE UNION OF THE STATES—THEY "MUST BE PRESERVED."

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AN ADDRESS

Delivered before the two Literary Societies of the University of North Carolina, in Gerard Hall, on the day preceding the Annual Commencement, in June, 1839, under the appointment of the Dialectic Society, by Hon. BEDFORD BROWN.

Gentlemen of the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies:

In compliance with the invitation with which I have been honored I appear before your two bodies, on this occasion, though not without experiencing that sincere and unaffected diffidence, which a just estimate of the important and interesting duties of the task, which it has been your pleasure to assign me, is so well calculated to inspire.

This request, rendered the more imposing from its having been the second of the kind which I have received from the same highly respectable source, did not leave me at liberty to consult considerations of mere personal convenience, in deciding whether I should accept it, as the circumstances under which it was made, gave it, in my estimation, the force of imperative duty.

Each successive year, for a long period of time, has brought to this venerable seat of learning, under the summons of one or the other of your bodies, some one to render this annual homage to the cause of literature—some one to offer at its shrine the productions of cultivated taste and rich endowments. The expectation, therefore, of making on this occasion any improvement on the admirable manner in which this office has heretofore been performed, often adorned as it has been by the powers of high genius and erudition, would be vain as the attempt

"To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
"To throw perfume on the violet."

My highest ambition will, therefore, be gratified if any thing that I may say shall contribute to promote the honor of the great cause to which this occasion is consecrated, or aid in advancing the progress of Literature and intellectual improvement, so intimately and inseparably connected with the welfare and best interest of society.

However much I should have been gratified if your choice had called some other person to the performance of the task which has devolved on me, on the present occasion, yet I cannot but express the lively satisfaction which I derive from it, by its tendency to recall recollections and to revive associations of by-gone times, and of scenes and events that never fail to leave an indelible impression on the minds of those who have participated in them. And why is it that the memory clings with such faithful tenacity, and the heart dwells with such fond enthusiasm, on the scenes and events of a College life? Why is it that, in looking back through the journey of life, the mind contemplates that period of our existence as "a green spot in memory's waste," which it reposes on with pleasure and delight? The noblest feelings of our nature give the response. It is because the generous ardor of unsophisticated youth then glows with all the warmth which the morning of life inspires. It is because imagination, that agreeable enchantress, more vivid in early age, gilds the future with her brightest hues and invests the path of life with all that is lovely and captivating. And again, it is because these cherished illusions have not been dispelled by a nearer and more intimate view of the motives and feelings that ordinarily influence the actions of society, and a knowledge of which, acquired by that experience that more advanced age brings, constitutes what may be termed the philosophy of life.

These are laws of our nature, which a wise Providence has ordained, and far be it from me to apply to the impulses which spring from them the frigid rules of that austere philosophy which is ever ready to censure the generous enthusiasm of youth, even when it "leans to virtue's side;" and to see error in its susceptibility to the finer sympathies of our nature. That youth should be thus constituted, is alike honorable to our species, from the ennobling traits which it displays, and illustrative of that infinite wisdom whose goodness has in that way mitigated the ills incident to human life, by heightening its capacity at that period for enjoyment.

In selecting a topic worthy the consideration of the enlightened assembly which has convened here on this occasion, and which now honors me with its presence, none occurs to my mind more entitled to arrest the attention and to interest profoundly the feelings of the patriot, the philanthropist and the philosopher, than the influence which the general spread of intelligence, in all its branches of Science and Literature, in alliance with free institutions of Government, is exercising on the age in which we live, and is likely to exert over the future destinies of the civilized world.

We live in an age teeming with great events and prolific of the most exciting and stirring incidents. A new era in improvement, social, moral and political, has burst upon us. The human mind, for the last half century, as if awakened from a long trance which bound and fettered its energies for centuries, is by investigation and discovery, every day making new and invaluable acquisitions in all the arts that are useful to society, or which contribute to its embellishment. Ambition is no longer seen, as in the person of Alexander, weeping because it has no more worlds to conquer; or as in that of Cæsar, sighing with regret before the statue of the Macedonian Monarch, because of his having left him so little to achieve in the art of war. No! Ambition, that noble infirmity of our nature, and which, when properly directed, is one of its best attributes, seeks another and a far more beneficial field for its achievements. Its energies are no longer directed to the battle field, to erect trophies to victory; but they are directed to the far more glorious conquests, which science is daily accomplishing over the material world, and by the aid of which it is rendered more and more subservient to the comfort, utility, and grandeur of the human race.

To what cause is it that we are, in a great degree, to attribute the great events which so eminently characterize the present age, in its onward and brilliant career, in the march of mind and improvement? Under what auspicious influence is it that the minds of men, freed from the chains of error and superstition which for ages seemed to imprison them, are opening new fields for enterprize, and extending still further the boundaries of their dominion? To what are we to ascribe the morally grand and consolatory spectacle which a state of universal peace, now existing among the civilized nations of the earth, this day presents? To the introduction of free institutions of Government among some, and to the extension of liberal principles, more or less, among all the nations of the world, where the lights of civilization have shed themselves, together with the spread of the mild influence of christianity, is due, mainly, this great reform which gives to the present age so just a pre-eminence for the diffusion of knowledge throughout society, and as a consequence of increased intelligence, the more universal enjoyment throughout all its gradations of the comforts and refinements of modern times. Free Government is to the moral, what the sun is to the physical world. It calls into action its dormant energies, quickens and animates its faculties and assists in developing their usefulneess and beauty, as the latter, by its genial and vivifying influence, causes nature to unfold its beauties for the admiration of man, and to yield its abundant stores for his gratification and subsistence.

The free and unrestrained use of the faculties of the mind, is the great moral lever, in the social state, which, in modern times, puts in motion its energies. By removing from man all restraints upon his individual liberty, except such as the good of society requires shall be imposed, it gives him a more exalted elevation, opens upon his mind more enlarged views, impresses him with a consciousness of his own dignity and imparts to his faculties that full play and entire freedom, so essential to their expansion.

That a Republican form of Government has a superior tendency, over any other, to accomplish these results, and to call forth in greater perfection the powers of the mind, in science, in literature and eloquence, is a proposition that would seem to be obvious, from the theory and principles on which it is founded, and from their congeniality to the cultivation of each and all of these pursuits. We are not left, however, to arguments drawn from mere speculative reasoning, to establish the truth of this proposition, but it has been conspicuously exemplified by the distinguished success with which every branch of learning was cultivated under the ancient Republics of Greece and Rome, and, also, by the fostering effects on them, which are rapidly and daily developing themselves at the present time, under our own admirable system of Government.

Besides the favorable influence exerted on the progress of learning, by the more unrestrained use of the faculties which it gives, and by the right which every citizen enjoys under it, to participate in public affairs, both of themselves so well calculated to promote inquiry and to diffuse intelligence, the greater security which it extends to the acquisitions of individual enterprize and industry, powerfully tends to the same beneficial result.

That system of Government which protects the fruits of labor to the greatest extent, and takes from it the smallest amount of its earnings, contributes in effect the greatest amount of intelligence. By it industry is stimulated and the strongest inducement is held out to acquire and accumulate property, which brings with it leisure to cultivate and improve the mind. Under more arbitrary systems, where the rapacious hand of power wrests from labor the fruits of its industry, to minister "to low ambition and the pride of Kings," the deleterious effects may be traced, not alone in the impoverishment of the great body of their citizens, but in their ignorance and degradation. Compelled to toil incessantly for a bare subsistence, neither the means nor the leisure are afforded essential to mental cultivation.

It is this that, in a great degree, creates the marked distinction in intelligence between the American citizen, who labors in the pursuits of agriculture and the mechanic arts, and the European operative. It is this, among other causes, which is giving to intellectual improvement in this country that powerful impulse which it has received, and which is aiding in the spread of that universal intelligence throughout our land, which is every where so rapidly pervading it.

Of the peculiar aptitude and tendency of a system of popular Government to foster invention, and, by the aid of science, to bring the most valuable discoveries into general and successful operation, a survey of the condition of our own country, brought about by the application of steam, that powerful agent in modern improvement, to the purposes of travel and of transportation by land and water, exhibits the most astonishing results. While to England is due the honor of having first successfully accomplished that daring and wonderful enterprize of establishing steam navigation across the Atlantic, to American genius is, undoubtedly, due the far greater honor of having first practically applied steam to the purposes of navigation. To this invention of American genius, is due the merit of the mighty achievements which it has since effected in behalf of social, commercial, and intellectual improvement, throughout the civilized world. It has, in effect, almost annihilated space and time, by bringing the old and new worlds into closer neighborhood, and greatly promoted the social intercourse of nations by more rapid communication.

No country, it is believed, at this time, employs so great a number of steam boats, in her internal commerce, as the United States, and it may with confidence be asserted that the entire extent and distance of rail road now in operation in all the different States of the Union, exceeds that of any State or Kingdom in Europe. In the immense and fertile valley watered by the Mississippi and its tributaries, more than any where else, has this powerful agent, by its application to the purposes of navigation, wrought its most wonderful effects. It is there that it has accelerated improvement, in all its branches, with a degree of rapidity never before witnessed in any other country.

When the mind contemplates the magnificent results to which I have made allusion, and which have been accomplished by States whose Federal Government numbers but little more than half a century in age, what a proud triumph does it present for the friends of popular Government, in its superior adaptation to advance the improvement of the age! What a noble spectacle does it afford, in the effects which it has produced, and is likely to produce, on the future destinies of our country! Nor are we to estimate its beneficial effects alone by the physical and moral improvement which it confers on society, but, in looking to its effects in aiding the more wide and rapid spread of intelligence, and in facilitating intercourse throughout every portion of the country, we cannot fail to observe in them the causes of greater stability and of added strength to the bonds of our glorious Union.

Not less instrumental in advancing improvement, and in its tendency, to aid in that great revolution which is now going on in the moral condition of the world, is the extensive and almost universal introduction of machinery; and by the substitution of which, so large a portion of manual labor is superseded. In no portion of the world, has the power of invention distinguished itself more by its numerous additions to the stock of valuable impovements, calculated to add to the physical comforts and convenience of society, than in the United States. By the introduction of newly invented mechanical agents, and their application to all the various useful pursuits of life, a single individual is often able to accomplish, what it required the labor of hundreds before to perform. The effect has been to cheapen production, to multiply greatly the comforts of life, and vastly to ameliorate the condition of that portion of society engaged in occupations of labor. Many were led to apprehend effects far from salutary, on our system of Government, by the great change which the extensive introduction of machinery was likely to produce in society, and by its supposed tendency, to introduce a more luxurious and artificial system of habits, in place of those of greater simplicity. So far from having the effect to subvert popular institutions, it is more likely to prove a powerful auxiliary in their support, by the greater facility it furnishes to procure the comforts of life in all its walks, and the consequently increased leisure it affords, for the cultivation of the mind.

While therefore, one of the admirable effects of our Government is, to bring into useful action the discoveries of science; the beneficial influence of the latter, is beautifully illustrated, in its tendency to sustain the system of the former under which it best flourishes; each thus giving to the other reciprocal aid and support.

Not less beneficial, is its influence in promoting and encouraging the cause of literature.—In no other country in the world, are so many Colleges and Academies to to be found for the cultivation and promotion of science and literature, as in ours. There is not a State in the Union that has not established and endowed one or more Colleges, and scarcely a village in our wide extended country that is not experiencing the advantages of a system of Academic education. Altogether it may be safely asserted that the minds of a greater number of youth are, at this day, receiving the lights and benefits of education in this, than in any other country. Can there be a doubt then, that the result of this almost universal system of education, will be the establishment of an elevated national Literature? To doubt it would be to underrate American genius, which has already signalized itself in many of the departments of learning, and even surpassed, in some of the most valuable inventions of the present day, that of the older European States.

A highly refined taste in literature is necessarily (even under the most favorable circumstances) slow in its progress. It is the fruit only, of long and laborious cultivation, and is to be found only in that advanced state of society in which each branch of learning has its separate and exclusive followers. The human mind is so constituted, that one person seldom attains distinction in more than one profession or branch of learning. Hence it is, that in most of the European States, eminent for learning, not only is labor minutely divided in all the mechanic arts, but each of the learned professions and pursuits of learning have their exclusive votaries. It is from this cause, that they have attained so much excellence in each.

A material error, not only in professional education, but in all the departments of learning in this country, is the attempt to blend too many pursuits. It is true, that it gives more of that ready and general information, for which our citizens are more than any other people distinguished, but education is consequently less thorough and more superficial.

The pervading taste for reading, and the almost universal desire for information, in every walk of life, in our country, afford the most gratifying evidence that literature is rapidly advancing, and at a period not distant, will attain that distinction which it has in some of the older and more wealthy States in Europe.

Already a bright constellation of genius is adorning and illustrating the annals of our literature, and gives promise of the distinction to which it is hereafter destined to arrive. No country presents richer and more choice materials for its cultivation and success, in all its departments, than ours. To the poet is presented the beauty and grandeur of a natural scenery unequalled in any other part of the world, to call forth the aspirations of genius. To the pen of the historian is offered a field, abounding in character and events, worthy the pen of a Thucydides or a Tacitus. What page of Grecian or Roman history commemorates councils of higher wisdom, actions of more exalted patriotism, or deeds of more heroic valor, than are to be found in the annals of that greatest event of modern times, the American revolution?—Where can we find a parallel, in ancient or modern times, to the rapid advance of all the arts of peace, and to the extraordinary degree of prosperity which it had pleased Providence that the States of this confedracy should enjoy, at this time, under the auspices of popular institutions? These are all rich and attractive fields to invite the labors of genius, and cannot fail to call forth its powers, in a manner corresponding to the exalted nature of the themes which they present.

While the progress of literature in our own country, & the influence which it is every where exerting on the civilization of the present age, is a subject of the highest congratulation it cannot be denied that much of the fashionable reading of the present day, is unfavorable to the formation of a true and refined taste, in that branch of learning. The wild and romantic imagination of Byron—the oriental richness of Moore—together with the attractive tales of Bulwer, and other kindred productions, have aided in forming an epicurean taste in literature, that is satisfied with nothing that is not savory and high-seasoned. That the productions of each of these authors possess, in many respects, great merit, and are distinguished by great talents, cannot be denied; but, as the excessive gratification of the appetite in luxurious food has the effect to enervate the body, it is reasonable to conclude that too much indulgence in that description of reading, is far from adding either to the vigor of the mind or to the strength of moral sentiment.

Strongly imbued with the same faults as the works of many of the distinguished writers of the present day are, and tending, as they do to minister to the same kind of literary appetite, the effects has been to occasion, in too great a degree the neglect of those eminent classic English writers in literature and poetry, who stand unrivalled, in modern times, for their beauty of taste and purity of style, for others of more doubtful merit, and of more questionable utility. The pure and classic writings of Addison, Goldsmith, and others of the same character, however overlooked and displaced, can never be superseded. However unfashionable they may have become, at the present day, they can never diminish in value. Inculcating lessons of the most useful and consummate wisdom, and presenting a faithful picture of society in all its diversified shades of character, they are adapted to all ages, and to all times, and can never be excelled, as models of pure taste and style, by any other compositions in the English language.

Not less important to the acquirement of a correct scholarship and a just taste in literature, is the study of the ancient classic writers of Greece and Rome, notwithstanding the efforts which, in some quarters, have been recently made to disparage them. They have long survived the nations that produced them, and remain as imperishable monuments of their taste and genius. They come down to us with the accumulated approbation of many centuries, and have received the homage of every enlightened age. The highest proof of their merits, is the universality with which they are read & studied throughout the civilized world. Many authors have produced works in modern times, of distinguished merit, in the various branches of literature, but few, however, have obtained the general suffrage of all the enlightened nations in their favor, of the present day, while the classic writers of ancient Greece and Rome are read by nations, speaking every language in every part of the civilized world.

Like the perfect productions in the fine arts of the ancient masters, they form models of classic taste and excellence, that are "unimitated and inimitable."

Besides their utility in the attainment of critical scholarship, they possess other and great merit. To the learned professions they may be said to be almost indispensable. To the mere scholar, they afford an inexhaustible source of pleasure and instruction. And to the mind of the youthful student, in a republic, they present the finest models of character afforded by antiquity, for study and imitation. Lofty patriotism, inflexible justice, disinterested generosity, the highest wisdom in war and in peace, not only come recommended to him by every grace of eloquence and of poetry, but illustrated by examples, that dignify and exalt human nature.

Eloquence likewise, has always flourished most, under popular institutions of government. Liberty is the element alone, which is congenial to its growth. It can never exist to any extent in governments that are despotic. It is the offspring of freedom, of thought, and of high and elevated sentiment. The slave of a despotism, however skilled in the arts of adulation which he offers up at the shrine of absolute power, can never attain it, because his native independence is lost in the servility of the degraded parasite. Hence it is that we are to look to the ancient Republics of Greece and Rome, for the highest and noblest specimens of public speaking, that have ever adorned the annals of eloquence. The City of Athens was its chosen and favorite abode.—There it attained a perfection which stands unrivalled in all succeeding ages. The lively and sprightly minds of her citizens, the high culture and civilization prevailing among them, and the admirable rhetorical schools in which the art of eloquence was taught, all contributed to the formation of that excellence for which she is so celebrated. But to her free Government, more than to any other cause, is to be traced her extraordinary success. Her citizens accustomed to take part in all great public deliberations, became not only well versed in affairs of State but universally possessed of a fine taste in eloquence. To such a degree had it been cultivated that her orators were cautious of letting fall, before an Athenian Assembly, any expression in the least calculated to offend against so refined a taste. There would have been no more powerful incentive to its study, than the glorious rewards which were held out to those who attained to distinguished excellence in it. It reigned with almost absolute sway in her popular assemblies, and received the highest honors and distinction which she could confer.

It was the noble spirit of emulation excited by her institutions and the love of liberty which they infused, that called forth, in so high a degree, those wonderful powers in her orators, that have ever since been the themes of admiration and delight.

Political liberty is the strong and animating principle of eloquence; but when danger impends over that liberty, and it is threatened with destruction, it is then that eloquence receives its truest inspiration, and rises to its highest grandeur. It is then that it appears in all the beauty and force of moral sublimity. On no page of history, is eloquence exhibited more triumphant and patriotism more exalted than in the celebrated orations of Demosthenes, rousing his countrymen to measures of defence against the designs meditated by Philip against their liberties. In more modern times, it was the same ennobling principle that called forth the resistless and intrepid eloquence of Hampden in defence of English liberty. And more recently, in our country, it was the same holy enthusiasm in behalf of liberty and the same invincible hatred of oppression that fired the genius and hallowed the eloquence of a Samuel Adams and a Patrick Henry.

The genial clime of Greece is unchanged, and is the same that it was when she gave to the world so many illustrious examples of valor, wisdom and eloquence. Nature, in that beautiful and classic land, continues to dispense her bounties with the same liberal and prodigal hand as formerly; but man has degenerated beneath the withering influence of despotism. The fervor of patriotism is extinct with her liberties, and the fire of genius no longer kindles in her popular assemblies the love of noble actions and of glorious achievements.

While it was the fate of the great States of antiquity, that were so renowned for their science and literature and eloquence, to have become extinct, and with them the light of civilization for centuries, it cannot be otherwise than a subject of the most pleasing reflection to the philosopher and the philanthropist, that the great improvements in every branch of learning, and the highest state of civilization which so much distinguish the present age, are comparatively secure against the recurrence of so great a calamity.—The invention of the art of printing, in modern times, by means of which Europe was redeemed from barbarism, and learning was revived after having almost entirely disappeared for many centuries, affords to the enlightened nations of the world the almost certain means of perpetuating, to the remotest ages, the blessings of learning and civilization. Revolutions in States and Kingdoms may happen, dynasties may overthrow, and nations may be conquered, but literature and science, and with them civilization, are destined to survive through all time to come.—The great inventions made by the aid of science in modern times, the high perfection to which the arts have attained, can never be lost, by a return of barbarism and ignorance, but will be handed down to all future generations. The art of printing is the inextinguishable light that will preserve and perpetuate them.

That there will be no retrograde in society, and that it is destined to perform this high office, so consolatory to the hopes of man, and so gratifying to the pride of the friends of learning, we have abundant evidence to induce the belief in the striking fact that improvement of every kind has been rapidly advancing from the date of its invention to the present time. The great facility it affords of multiplying the number of books and their almost universal circulation throughout society, more especially in this country from the cheap rate at which they can be acquired, has given an impulse to the spread of intelligence, unprecedented in any former age.

Learning, no longer confined to a favored class, as in the days of ignorance and superstition, who used it to enslave the rest of mankind and to promote their own schemes of aggrandizement and ambition, is penetrating every part of the land. Its rays are scattered as the light of heaven, falling alike on the humble inhabitant of the cottage and the wealthy occupant of the palace. Even under the governments of Europe, most remarkable for their absolute and despotic authority over their subjects, learning through the medium of the press, is asserting its prerogative, and a more enlightened public opinion is already beginning to be felt. It is teaching ambition to moderate its pretensions, power to lessen its authority, and is enforcing a greater respect among those who govern, for the rights of the governed. This is the inevitable consequence of the progress of a more diffused intelligence, the very nature of which is to make war upon antiquated abuses, and to introduce systems more conformable to the spirit of the age.

It is under the influence of this more enlightened public opinion that abuses in the government of England, which have been tolerated for centuries, are now crumbling and tottering to their fall. It is under the operation of the same cause, that royal authority has been greatly circumscribed in France, religious toleration established, and her hereditary peerage abolished. To literature and science, through the instrumentality of the press, belong the honor of these achievements in favor of civil and religious liberty, over institutions incompatible with the spirit of the age. Before the lights of civilization and more universal intelligence, the errors and abuses of former times are rapidly disappearing, and the day has passed by when physical force governed the world, having yielded to that moral power which now, to a great extent, controls and directs its movements.

It is your fortune, gentlemen, to enter on the theatre of active life in the midst of this noble career in the progress of improvement and of the ascendency of mind, which so pre-eminently mark the present epoch, and which I have so imperfectly attempted to describe. A portion of you have reached that interesting period in the life of the student, which separates him forever from associations which are endeared to him by the most agreeable recollections, and from instructors under whose assiduous care and salutary counsels, the mind has been improved and the principles of morality have been strengthened. In another day, a portion of you will have bid a final and last adieu to the tranquil and more sequestered walks of collegiate life, to enter on those of a more exciting and eventful character; you quit them with mingled sensations of regret and gratification; of regret that you are so soon to be separated from associations which you so much value, and of gratification at the prospect which opens before you, in the new scenes in which you are about to act a part.—What is more interesting to the parents and friends of youth, than this period of their lives, and the new relation to society which it brings? What more interesting to youth themselves, than the reflections which the occasion cannot fail to call forth in their own minds? Buoyant with hope and filled with anticipation, your minds look forward to the journey of life which lays before you, like the adventurous mariner who is eager to embark on the voyage which he is about to undertake. Impelled by a generous emulation, you are prepared to test the strength and efficiency of that intellectual armour, in the various pursuits of life, which you have acquired through a course of years, by diligent toil and study. No longer relying on that auspicious guidance, which preceptors afforded, whilst conducted onward in life, by their tutelary counsels, the steps which closes the collegiate course of the student places him in the new and more elevated arena of manhood, and irrevocably commits him to the fulfilment of all the duties and responsibilities which society exacts from him in that position. The moment he leaves the quiet and flowery walks of collegiate education, to participate in the higher and graver duties of life, that moment he is thrown upon his own energies, and compelled to look to his own individual efforts to sustain him in the part which he is destined to act in the eventful drama of life.

If the roseate hues of youthful imagination sometimes gild the vista of the future, with every prospect that is brilliant and every pleasure that is fascinating, the voice of experience, less flattering, but more philosophic and unerring, admonishes us that they are often delusive and that the path of life is more or less environed with difficulty, peril and uncertainty. Hence the necessity that those who are about to embark on the sometimes calm, but often tempestuous ocean of human life, should endeavor to prepare themselves for its various emergencies, by invigorating the mental faculties, by confirming moral principles and by strengthening and fortifying resolution. More than ever requisite, is it, to go forth shielded by this moral panoply at the present period, when the high state of mental cultivation which belongs to the age brings into the field of life, in all its departments, strong antagonists for every prize and skilful competitors for every distinction. Impressed, as your minds no doubt have been, with the maxims of experience and the precepts of wisdom, in regard to your future action by the able and learned preceptors, to whom was committed the superintendence of your education, yet I trust it will not be deemed irrelevant, on the present occasion, to suggest a few hints and principles directed to the same end, and intended to advance the same object.

The first duty, and by far transcending in importance every other which an individual owes it to himself to perform, before entering on the career of active life, is that of the formation of character, or the adoption of certain principles of action and of conduct for his future government. That early principles adopted, and early habits formed, more or less influence the future course of every individual throughout life, and make either his prosperity or his adversity, is a moral truth which every day's experience and observation confirm. Mankind are but too apt to arraign Providence, on account of evils that are the result of their own folly and indiscretion. As a general rule, then, it may be said that every one is in some degree the maker of his own good or bad fortune, and that every one may trace his happiness or his misery, his success or his failure in life, his respectability or the want of it, to the habits formed by him in early life. How important then is it, not only to his own happiness, but to his success, that a young man just about to enter on the threshold of life should adopt rules for the government of his conduct founded on principles of virtue and morality. How often have we seen talents the most exalted, acquirements that would have adorned any station in society, the victims of some vice early contracted or of some habit which if it had been at first resisted might have been overcome and subdued.

The intimate and inseparable connexion between virtue and happiness is not less true in principle than it is of daily exemplification in practice. The indulgence of bad passions or a departure from the path of moral rectitude almost invariably brings its own punishment, while on the other hand an adherence to virtuous and moral principles almost as infallibly rewards those who follow their dictates. This moral law of our nature is not less indicative of the wisdom of Providence than founded on principles of justice. By it, our interest, our duty and our happiness are made to harmonize. By it, vice is not only punished by its own actions, but it is made the interest of every individual in society to pursue the paths of virtue and morality, because his happiness is more effectually promoted by it. Nor is this remark more applicable to the higher grades of offence against morality, than the smaller moral obliquities which infest society. Who is there that has not repeatedly observed instances in which cunning & duplicity, after pursuing all their devious paths for a time apparently with success, have ultimately been frustrated and caught in their own toils? Who, on the other hand, has not witnessed virtue and integrity triumphant over all difficulties and ultimately rewarded for their purity of intention and singleness of purpose. It is true, that there are occasional exceptions to these remarks, and that calamity and misfortune sometimes visit the most prudent and exemplary; but as general rules, their truth will be found to be justified both by observation and experience.

An elevated sense of honor, a love of probity and a strict adherence to integrity in every walk of life, constitute the only sure foundation of private virtue as they do the beauty and ornament of individual character and reputation.—They not only bring with them all the kindred virtues in beautiful association, but they bring with them that sense of conscious rectitude which affords to the mind its greatest enjoyment in prosperity and its highest solace in adversity. It was said by a wise man of antiquity, that the best way to keep good actions in memory was to refresh them with new ones. This maxim inculcate with much beauty, and at the same time force, the principle that it is not by merely abstaining from doing that which is wrong and immoral in itself, that good principles and habits are confirmed and perfected, but that the active exercise of the virtues, by good and beneficial actions, is necessary to keep alive and preserve them.

The youth who has terminated his course at College, and received the rewards and honors which his industry has gained for him, should never forget that the education which he has received is but the solid foundation on which to erect, afterwards, the superstructure of a still more enlarged knowledge and information.—The education which he has received, while there, places in his hands, as it were, the keys which command the richest treasures of science and literature. The study of Philosophy and Science lays open to him the beauties and mysteries of nature. "History, rich with the spoils of time," informs him of the cause by which nations and empires have risen, flourished and decayed; and the study of the ancient classics,